PUDUKKOTTAI STATE

NATIONAL WAR FRONT BUREAU

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Members of the public are requested to make a free present of any suitable old Tamil books they can spare for the perusal, in their leisure time, of our soldiers outside India.

Books so given will be handed over to the Superintendent of the State Press, who will arrange to despatch them.

LECTURE CLXVIII.

CAUSES OF GERMAN FAILURE IN RUSSIA.

London commentators emphasise that with the Red Army's capture of Smolensk, a definite turning point has been reached when major results of the 27 months of fighting can be assessed with certainty, while, at the same time, it is possible to attempt a forecast about future developments.

It is pointed out that when Hitler attacked Russia, one of his three definite economic objectives was food. The British blockade had cut off Germany from fertilizers and certain categories of food. To supply these from the resources within "Greater Germany" absorbed 1,600,000 additional men in agriculture. This drain on man-power was insuppportable.

His second aim was the industrial area of the Donetz Basin. Germany needed this urgently to offset America's production, which was getting into its stride as an "arsenal of democracy".

His third aim was oil. The British blockade made Rumania the sole source of Germany's natural oil. Synthetic production, always vulnerable to the R. A. F., absorbed an additional 80,000 men, a second heavy drain on man-power.

RED ARMY NOT DEFEATED.

The Wehrmacht partially achieved his first objective, it also occupied the Donetz Basin, though without being able to exploit it. But to reach the third objective (he was close to it in the autumn of 1942) and consolidate all the three objectives, the Wehrmacht

had first to defeat the Red Army. And in spite of Dietrich who said : " There can be no doubt that the Soviet armies are crushed. The Soviet Union is finished militarily " (October 9, 1941), Germany proved utterly incapable of such a task. By their flight from Smolensk, the Germans have served a notice on the world—including their own people—that they have completely failed in their attack on Russia, have abandoned all prospect of future success, and are in process of trying to cut their losses and save what they can from the wreck.

It is also pointed out that this is of the very greatest significance, and must in the future be taken into account when making any assessment of the war situation as a whole.

GERMAN OVERCONFIDENCE.

Why did the Germans fail ? They were outfought by the Russians who showed a capacity to improve as the campaign progressed in strategy, tactics and equipment. But a contributing factor is the obvious bankruptcy of the German High Command—all the more surprising since German Generals had a very high reputation. Nevertheless, the German High Command displayed the grossest overconfidence in the early stages of the campaign, overconfidence which showed itself first in the failure to prepare for the 1941 winter, and finally in the belief that they could capture Stalingrad, a belief which led to the débacle of a year ago.

Since then, the German High Command has committed itself to the amazing policy of conducting the Kursk offensive, as though it were the Polish campaign of 1939. The result was that the 15 panzer divisions employed incurred such losses (Russian figures give 2,282 tanks destroyed between July 5 and 16 alone) that the German army was virtually stripped of its armour. Nothing was left but to retreat.

Finally, the German High Command, its overconfidence punctured, has lately shown signs of real panic. The vaunted " hedgehogs " were none of them defended to the last. After the experience of Stalingrad, they dared not risk loss of men and equipment, and in view of this risk they preferred to retreat rather than attempt to inflict heavy losses on the Russians from prepared positions. They had in fact abandoned even the attritional warfare.

POSSIBLE NEW LINE.

While it is impossible to forecast exactly the line on which the Germans hope to stem the Red Army, informed London circles consider that the shortest position would be the line (approximating to the Curzon Line) running south from the Riga via Grodno, west of Bialystock through Brest Litovsk, along the river Bug with its right flank resting on the Carpathian mountains. Such a line would have the following advantages : (a) It would be outside the territory of the Reich—though only just. (b) It would be approximately 700 miles long against the present approximate length of 1,200 miles. (c) It would have good communications behind it. (d) It would be screened to the east by the Pripet marshes, while the Russian communications immediately to the east of the line would be poor and severely stretched. (e) There is a possibility—but only a possibility—that some German troops could be released to defend the south and west fronts.

Such a line would have the following disadvantages : (a) The vast withdrawal involved would shake still further the confidence of the German people in the High Command. (b) It would lay open the Balkans to attack by the Red Army, possibly involving the loss of all natural fuel.

One factor, which may tend to be overlooked in summing up, is that the R. A. F. attack on the Ruhr earlier this year is likely soon to become effective on the German east front in terms of serious shortage of equipment. Lord Selborne stated on June 9 that up to 35 per cent of the Ruhr productive capacity had probably been destroyed. This means three months' production. In fact, the German soldiers in the east are facing an extremely critical period of three months. Their leaders have been proved incapable; the Red Army is hot on their heels; the R. A. F., has deprived them of equipment and the winter will soon add to their difficulties.

WEEKLY WAR SUMMARY.

(A)—LEADING EVENTS.

7—10—43 (Thursday). Lord Louis Mountbatten, the Supreme Commander of S.-E. Asia Command, arives in New Delhi.
Russians capture *NEVEL*.
STUTTGART in Germany is heavily raided by R.A.F.

8—10—43 (Friday). Allies occupy *CAPUA* in Italy.

9—10—43 (Saturday). Heavy American day-light raid on *ANKLAM* (near Stettin), Airenburg (East Prussia), *DANZIG* and *GDYNIA* (Poland). *TAMAN* Peninsula is complet-ely evacuated by the Germans.

10—10—43 (Sunday). Allies occupy *KOLOMBANGARA* Island in the Solomons.

11—10—43 (Monday). Japanese bomb *MADRAS* for the first time; very slight casualties and no damage.

12—10—43 (Tuesday). Portugal grants facilities for Britain to use the *AZORES* Islands.

13—10—43 (Wednesday). *ITALY* declares war on *GERMANY*; Britain, America and Russia accept *ITALY* as a co-belli-gerent.

Russians capture *MELITOPOL*.

Devastating Allied raid on *RABAUL* in New Britain; 176 Jap planes put out of action; 120 Jap naval units sunk.

(B)—NEWS IN BRIEF.

Russia.—Autumn rains have brought the Germans no relief. The Russians launching a big new offensive on Oct. 8 have captured NEVEL on the LENINGRAD front and pierced the Middle Dnieper at 3 points, N. of KIEV, S. of PRESLAVL and S-E., of KREMENCHUG. Russian troops have entered the suburbs of GOMEL and are also fighting at the approaches to VITEBSK. The occupation of the TAMAN Peninsula having been completed Russian guns are firing across the Kerch Straits in preparation for an attack on the CRIMEA.

Italy.—By capturing CAPUA—19 miles N. of NAPLES, the 5th Army has established a bridgehead on the Volturno River. The 8th Army is vigorously driving towards the West. In the central sector a limited advance has been made towards VINCHIATURO. The Battle of the Volturno River is on. Both sides are reinforcing. The struggle is to open a way to ROME. The river is in flood. The enemy has broken its banks and flooded the country. American ships have shelled PESCARA, 40 miles N. W. of TERMOLI, on the 8th Army front.

A German atttack on Oct., 7th on SYMI—5 miles from the coast of TURKEY has been repulsed.

Czech forces have landed at UCINJ and BUDDUA.

The Yugoslav National Army of Liberation has taken the towns of LIVNO, KUPRES, VARASDINSKE—TOPLICE, LUDBREG and TUSLA.

Air war over Germany.—The principal targets were STUTTGART, FRIEDRICHSHAFEN, ANKLAM, AIRENBURG, DANZIG, GDYNIA, MUNSTER and KREFELD.

War at Sea :—

Sep. 22.—H. M. Midget submarine carried out an attack on units of the German Fleet in a N. NORWAY fjord and damaged the German battleship *Tirpitz* (35,000 tons).

The Pacific.—The Allies have occupied KOLOMBANGARA Island, including its base at VILA and ISABEL island, both in the SOLOMONS. Earlier on Oct, 2, U. S. destroyers intercepted enemy barges evacuating the Japanese from KOLOMBANGARA and sank most of them. 'Carnage and complete confusion resulted', says the report.

Oct. 5.—Japanese garrisons and installations on WAKE ISLAND were bombed and shelled by a Task Force of the Pacific fleet.

Oct. 6.—An American destroyer struck at Japanese warships at VELLA LAVELLA, escorting enemy evacuees.

Later Allied bombers attacked AMBOINA in the DUTCH EAST INDIES.

Oct. 11.—MACASSAR (CELEBES) was bombed.

Oct. 13.—The heaviest raid of the war was carried out over the Japanese base of RABAUL in NEW BRITAIN, in which in a two-hour attack, 350 tons of bombs were dropped, 177 enemy aircraft were put of action and 120 ships were destroyed..

China.—American aircraft have defended Chinese advance bases and bombed Japanese shipping at KIUKIANG on the Yangtse River. They also attacked GIALEM air-field at HANOI in French INDO-CHINA.

Burma.—Along the ARAKAN Front, the weather has improved and patrols are active. Details of air-raids are given in the next section.

ALLIED AIR RAIDS.

4—10—43 (Monday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY :—(By U. S. A. A. F.)

The aircraft component factory at FRANKFURT (Germany).
The enemy airfield at ST. NAZAIRE (France).
Enemy shipping in the NORTH SEA (75 Axis planes shot down; 15 Allied planes missing).

NIGHT :—(By R. A. F.).

FRANKFURT (Germany).
LUDWIGSHAFEN.
Other objectives in N. W. GERMANY (12 Allied planes missing).

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Bridges and marshalling yards at BOLZANO and PISA (Italy).
Railroad yards at ISERNIA, MIGNANO and TERRACINA (all in Italy).
Trains, rail road junctions and communications in ITALY.
The airfields at MENIDI and ARGOS (Greece)

RUSSIA.

(48 Axis planes shot down).
Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the Russian Front.

FAR EAST.

Jap evacuation barges in the VILA area (Solomons).

BURMA.

Rail installations in the MANDALAY area.
Rolling stock at SHWEBO, SAGAING and YWATAUNG.
A large warehouse at MYINGYAN.
Shipping facilities at RANGOON.
TAUNGUP.

5—10—43 (Tuesday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY & NIGHT :—No information.

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

(15 enemy planes shot down; 6 Allied planes missing).
Marshalling yards at BOLOGNA (Italy).
Grosetto airfield north of ROME.
Roads and bridges at FORMIA and ISERNIA.

RUSSIA.

(59 enemy planes shot down.)
Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

Jap supply ships near CAPE ST. GEORGE and VITTU Island.
Supply dumps at GASMATA (N. Britain).
Jap evacuation bases off KOLOMBANGARA.
WAKE Island.

BURMA.

Rail installations at MEIKTILA.
Locomotives between INDAW and SAGAING.
A large steamer and other barges on the lower IRRAWADDY.
Railway installations at PROME.

6—10—43 (Wednesday).

NIGHT :—

Laying mines in enemy waters.

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Marshalling yards and warehouses at MESTRE (Italy).
Road junctions at MIGNANO, FORMIA and ISERNIA (Italy).
Motor transport in the battle area.
The airfield at MARITZA (Rhodes)
The harbour at SYROS.
The airfield at KASTELLI PEDIADA (Crete).

RUSSIA.

(32 Axis planes shot down).
Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the Russian Front.

FAR EAST.

Jap shipping on the YANGTSE River (China).

BURMA.

Railway installations at PROME.
Jap occupied buildings at KYAUKTAW.
Occupied villages on the MAYU Peninsula.
Enemy communications near the THAZI junction.
Rolling stock at YE-U.
The yards at SEGYI.
Motor transport along the lower IRRAWADDY.

7—10—43. (Thursday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

Day :—

Enemy shipping in the OOSTER-SCHELDE.
Offensive sweeps over France and the DUTCH Islands.

NIGHT :—

Aero engine factory at STUTTGART.
Radio-location equipment at FRIEDRICHSHAFEN.
MUNICH.
Laying mines in enemy waters.

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Motor transport behind the battle area (Italy).
Enemy communications and road junctions behind the battle area.

RUSSIA.

(87 enemy planes destroyed).
Air combats and aircraft on the ground all along the RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

Jap troops evacuating KOLOMBANGARA (Solomons).
Jap airfields in BOUGAINVILLE Island.
WAKE Island.

BURMA.

Railway yards at SAGAING.
Barracks at KALEWA.

8—10—43 (Friday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY :—(By R. A. F.)

Airfield at BREST (France).

(By U. S. A. A. F.)

Ship building yards at BREMEN (Germany).
Submarine yards at VEGESAK (Germany).

NIGHT :—

HANOVER, BREMEN and BERLIN (Germany).
Laying mines in enemy waters (3 Allied planes missing).

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Axis communications and transport behind the VOLTURNO River (Italy).

RUSSIA.

(47 Axis planes shot down).
Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

Barges off the KOLOMBANGARA coast.
The aerodrome at AMBON.
Cape GLOUCESTER and BROOKE Island (N. Britain).
Installations at WIDE Bay (N. Britain) and SIO (N. Guinea).
The airfield at HANOI (Indo-China).

BURMA.

Targets in TAUNGUP area.
Villages in the AKYAB area.

9—10—43 **(Saturday).**

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY:—

A radio aircraft components factory at ANKLAM (near Stettin).

Aircraft assembly plant at AIRENBURG (East Prussia).

Submarine yards at DANZIG.

Harbour and docks in GDYNIA (Poland).

NIGHT:—

No information.

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

(2 Allied planes missing; 6 enemy planes shot down).

Enemy communications in the Italian battle area.

An airfield north of ATHENS (Greece).

Airfields in CRETE and at MARITZA and CALATA (Dodecanese).

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

Jap evacuation barges near KOLOMBANGARA (Solomons).

Jap positions near MADANG (N. Guinea).

BURMA.

The Mingaladon airfield near RANGOON.

Troop positions in the KALEMYO area.

3 enemy occupied villages in the KALEMYO area.

A Tin mine in Southern BURMA.

10—10—43. **(Sunday).**

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY and NIGHT:—

No information.

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Enemy communications in the Italian battle area.

Airfields in GREECE, RHODES and CRETE.

Motor truck convoys north of ROME and near FROSINONE (Italy).

CASSINO and **MONDRAGONE** (both in Italy).

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

Jap cargo ships and barges off New BRITAIN.

Enemy ground installations in TENIMBARA Island.

Airfields in the WEWAK area (N. Guinea) (13 Jap planes destroyed).

BURMA.

Railway trucks at SAGAING.

Japanese positions at KUOMING.

ENEMY AIR RAIDS.

5—10—43 **(Tuesday).**

BRITAIN.

No enemy air activity.

RUSSIA.

Russian communications behind the Russian lines on the DNIEPER.

FAR EAST.

Air combats over the BAY of BENGAL (1 Jap plane damaged).

Allied occupied points in New GUINEA and the SOLOMONS.

6—10—43 **(Wednesday).**

BRITAIN.

LONDON District and **a few places** in East ANGLIA.

RUSSIA.

Russian communications behind the Russian lines on the DNIEPER.

FAR EAST.

VELLA LAVELLA (Solomons).

7—10—43 **(Thursday).**

BRITAIN.

LONDON area (only an alert).

Places in East ANGLIA and South-east ENGLAND (3 Axis planes shot down).

RUSSIA.

No information.

FAR EAST.

No enemy air activity.

8—10—43 **(Friday).**

BRITAIN.

A few places in KENT and ESSEX in ENGLAND

RUSSIA.

Russian positions on the east bank of the DNIEPER.

FAR EAST.

FINSCHAFEN (New Guinea).

9—10—43 **(Saturday).**

BRITAIN.

No enemy air activity.

RUSSIA.

East bank of DNIEPER.

FAR EAST.

VELLA LAVELLA.

10—10—43 **(Sunday).**

BRITAIN.

No enemy air activity.

RUSSIA and FAR EAST.

No information.

11—10—43 **(Monday).**

BRITAIN.

No enemy air activity.

RUSSIA.

Russian positions along the east bank of the DNIEPER River.

FAR EAST.

MADRAS (India) (very slight casualties).

SIDE LIGHTS.

THE NEW RUSSIAN OFFENSINE. The autumn rains have brought no relief as the Germans expected. The Russians have launched a fresh offensive, 'unprecedently daring, well-planned and well-organised. 'It is,' says *Reuter's* Special Correspondent in Moscow, 'the greatest

offensive of all time', and adds, 'that it is surging forward in a giant assault to crack the Dnieper defences and destroy the German armies in Russia.' The assault which started on Oct. 8 has already led to the forcing of the Dnieper at three vital points.

Informed commentators no longer speak of the Dnieper, or even of the Dniester, as the possible winter line. The RIGA-ODESSA line is suggested, as it would shorten the front by 200 miles and save some 40 divisions. The Pruth is sometimes mentioned as the final halting place. It has also been supposed that when the Russian frontier has been reached the Russians will become less arduous. If that be the expectation the Germans are doomed to disappointment. The present rains will be followed by winter, RUSSIA's proved ally, when the frost will harden the ground and help the Russians to advance further. Again RUSSIA will not be content merely with expelling the invader from her territory. She has accounts to settle, she has more cause than any one to exact retribution and make sure of the future. This cannot be done till BERLIN is reached and the Wehrmacht and the *Luftwaffe* have been knocked out.

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NO COME-BACK. In face of these facts, it is difficult to believe the BERLIN statement that 'one may rest assured that the German army groups stationed on the Eastern Front will not always remain on the defensive.' It was only on Sep. 22, that her military spokesmen plainly admitted that the present withdrawal was in fact a retreat, forced by absence of reserves and the Allied landings in ITALY. If only a small landing, such as has been made in ITALY, led to such large-scale retreat in RUSSIA, it is easy to forsee what the effect would be of larger landings in Western EUROPE, such as there are going to be. Such an event has been definitely promised. Churchill announced it to the House of Commons on Sep. 21 and Roosevelt to the Congress on Sep. 17. In these circumstances, the suggested resumption of the German offensive on the Eastern Front at some future date is silly bluff.

There are other reasons too. The war production of the Allies is now in excess of GERMANY's. The *Luftwaffe* no longer commands the air. The legend of the invincibility of her armies has been shattered. Occupied EUROPE is in revolt.

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NOT A ROUT YET. The present German retreat is not a rout yet: judged by the number of prisoners left behind it has not yet degenerated to that.

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NOT ACCORDING TO PLAN. Nor is it 'according to plan', as the Germans pretend. When the Russians fell back in 1941, their withdrawal was according to plan. They yielded first, before odds, receded into unlimited space, but came back when the enemy was exhausted. This is what the Russians did when Napoleon attacked and again when Hitler invaded.

But the present German retreat will not be followed by a come-back. It will be a permanent set-back.

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HAVE THEY A PLAN? It is possible in our generosity to credit the Germans with more foresight and planning than they have actually shown. But judged by recent events, they seem to be catching at straws, hoping to be saved by autumnal rains, winter's cold, and Allied misunderstandings, instead of relying on

their own strength and by preparing any definite plans. For instance, it is not understandable why they sacrificed whole armies at STALINGRAD only to give it up later, why they advanced to EL ALAMEIN, only to be driven out of a whole continent later, why they first held desperately to the KUBAN and have evacuated it since; why they built their defences in SMOLENSK, which they have now given up. They are now asking themselves whether to leave the CRIMEA or not.

The only plausible explanation is that hesitation and indecision have seized the German High Command. They do not know their own minds. They make their decisions belatedly. They are afraid of a repetition of STALINGRAD, while the desire to cling to what has been taken has not ceased. So they fight and stand on every line and retire when it approaches the conditions of a STALINGRAD.

The Battle of the Volturno is on, with the occupation of CAPUA by the 5th Army and of TERMOLI by the 8th Army. It is a historic battle-ground. It was at CAPUA that Hannibal established his winter quarters during the Punic wars, and it was on the banks of the Volturno 80 years ago that Garibaldi took his stand for the liberation of South ITALY.

The 5th Army's patrols have already crossed the river to probe German strongholds on the other side. The 8th Army has captured PESCARA and is pushing forward.

The Germans have breached the banks of the Volturno and flooded extensive areas in a desperate attempt to stem the Allied advance, but a three-pronged Allied offensive is poised to strike.

At present, the 5th Army which runs along the length of the Volturno covers one-third of the front. The other two-thirds is manned by the 8th Army extending to the Adriatic. The two Armies are hinged at BENEVENTO.

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CO-BELLIGERENT. Last week we reported that Badoglio's Government had been recognised as a Co-Belligerent. Within the week this denomination has been first objected to and later accepted, not because Allied opinion is shifting, but because we live in swift changing times.

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NEITHER FISH NOT FLESH. Early in the week we were informed that Badoglio was neither an ally nor an enemy nor a neutral, and that while theoretically he was still an enemy, for all practical purposes he had become an ally. One command belonging to his Government, for instance, was already 'functioning in South ITALY', co-operating with the Allies, and the Allies, in their turn, were also 'assisting and supporting' Badoglio in proportion to 'the amount and character of the action' he showed. Still the position was anomalous, and Badoglio was at best only an ally of 'the second-class' to whom the name of 'Co-Belligerent' could not be legally given.

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ITALY DECLARES WAR ON GERMANY. News has now come that Badoglio has cut the Gordian Knot by declaring war on GERMANY, and that BRITAIN, AMERICA and RUSSIA apprised of the news have welcomed ITALY as a Co-Belligerent. Thus one more nation has joined the ranks of the United Nations, and driven one more nail in the coffin of Hitler's hopes and ambitions.

GERMAN VANDALISM. Badoglio, in a statement he made on Wednesday (October 13), has stated that his chief reasons for taking the present decision were the German atrocities in ITALY. Here is an instance of it, as told by the Rector of the University of NAPLES :—

'On September 19, 12 days before the Allied forces marched into the place, the Germans herded together 300, men, women and children, dragged one of them at random and then shot him in the full view of the gathering as a reprisal for an attack on a German soldier. They also placed petrol drums inside the university buildings, and set ablaze the university, including the library. The fires lasted some days and the Naples Fire Brigade was forbidden to interfere. 2,000 books, some of them priceless, were burnt to ashes.'

No wonder that Badoglio has vowed that he would fight till the last German has been expelled from the Italian soil.

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A UNITED ITALY. The Axis hopes of disunion between Badoglio and the six democratic parties of the National Front in ITALY are also doomed to disappointment. The democratic leaders have in their wisdom, born no doubt of their bitter experience of 20 years of Fascist rule, now realised that in the interests of their country two things alone matter at present—the extinction of Fascism and the expulsion of the Germans. They have sunk their differences, and have themselves called on all people—from Conservatives to Communists—not only to resist the Germans but to rally round Badoglio. Badoglio, in return, is working in loyal collaboration with the National Front.

Count Carlo Sforza, former Foreign Minister of ITALY and leader of the Free Italian Movement is also coming to ITALY. He has promised full support to Badoglio. It thus looks as though before long a National democratic government may be formed including Badoglio, Sforza and the six democratic parties.

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DECREES GALORE. Meanwhile, Mussolini, his own Minister of the Interior, is hurling decree upon decree upon poor ITALY, threatening her citizens with punishments of all kinds ranging from death to imprisonment for co-operation with the Allies, for helping war prisoners, for spreading correct news, for attending public meetings and for refusal to perform compulsory tasks for the Axis.

Mussolini is also his own Minister for the Navy that does not exist, and from 'somewhere' he has ordered naval officers to report themselves immediately, for instructions! The Rome Radio also announces he has reorganised the Italian Air Force, but the question is where are the aircraft and the airmen.

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ITALIA IRREDENTA. The Axis is turning into a mad-house. While Mussolini is thus giving laws to an imaginary Fascist republic, Hitler, ignoring Mussolini's very existence—at any rate, caring little for his opinions or feelings—has quietly annexed part of Mussolini's republic-to-be—that is, the 3 provinces of BOLZANO, TRENTO and BALLUNO, on the ground that the population is largely of Teuton stock, and the country, of right; belongs to AUSTRIA. BOLZANO straddles the Brenner Pass.

IN THE BALKANS. Allied successes in ITALY and RUSSIA, added to the Yugo-Slav ventures on the Adriatic are having their psychological effect. With the Allied occupation of airfields in S. ITALY, the BALKAN STATES are realising that Hitler's 'Fortress' has become more roofless than ever. There are many signs of disaffection, such as little satellite states can show 'within the limits of safety.' They have reduced their clearing debts, cut down food supplies to GERMANY, withheld military aid, made anti-German statements and put out peace-feelers. The Slovenes, more daring, have formed a Special National Committee for the incorporation of the Slovene Littoral in YUGOSLAVIA.

The German attitude is one of alternate wooing and threatening. They show the mailed first occasionally to cow the revolters inside the Fortress, while at the same time the day is past when threats alone will be effective. Therefore, side by side the BALKAN STATES are also wooed. The present propaganda is ingenious. GERMANY now denies that she ever had any unfriendly motives towards the BALKANS, and asserts that all the previous annexations were made by the House of SAVOY. Rudolf Fischer, the diplomatic correspondent of the *Trans-ocean*, writes that 'the elimination of the Italian dynastic aspirations in certain parts of EUROPE will enable the Reich Government to consolidate conditions there in due consideration of the wishes of the peoples' which, in plain words, mean that the previous annexations were made by the King of ITALY but that GERMANY will now liberate them. In proof she says she has granted 'independence' to CROATIA and MONTENEGRO. But the BALKAN STATES have a long memory. They have not forgotten what the Germans declared in June 1942 at the NUREMBERG Conference. Then they said that 'the Economy and Commerce of the European continent must be surrendered totally to GERMANY's political requirements.'

Meanwhile, the Allies are doing their best to befriend the BALKANS by importing supplies, particularly to Yugoslav partisans and to Gen. Mihailovitah. 180,000 guerilla troops are also fighting now under Allied Command.

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HITLER'S NEIGHBOURS. The attitude of neutral States is a sure indication of the changed conditions of the war. As we reported earlier in the month, STOCKHOLM, sometime ago not only stopped transit traffic to GERMANY, but also threatened 'serious repercussions' if the persecution of the Danish Jews did not end. A year ago SWEDEN would not have dared to strike such an attitude. Now comes news from the neutral State of PORTUGAL that she has given facilities to BRITAIN to use the AZORES which belong to her. The AZORES occupy a key position in the Atlantic, and will be of great advantage to the Allies in the Battle of the Atlantic. PORTUGAL still remains a neutral, but her sympathies are clearly with her 600 year-old ally.

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THE THREE POWER CONFERENCE. The stage is being set for the historic Three-Power Conference. Mr. Cordell Hull, U. S. Secretary of State has passed through BRAZIL on his way to MOSCOW. Mr. Eden who will represent BRITAIN has said :—

'Now and again it happens that as the pages of history unfold, there come opportunities in man's progress through the world. I believe that in the next few months there

is such an opportunity for us, for RUSSIA and for the UNITED STATES to reach a lasting understanding. Such an understanding is a firm and indispensable basis for any future international system designed to assure peace and well-being throughout the world, and it is a secure foundation for the future British foreign policy, which will bé effective only within the framework of such a system. A balanced policy for BRITAIN and the British Commonwealth must rest on two main pillars—partnership with the UNITED STATES and partnership with RUSSIA.'

It is this double partnership, yet forming a single whole, that the forthcoming conference is out to achieve. BRITAIN, no doubt enjoys already, that is even from pre-PEARL HARBOUR days, the unstinted friendship of the U. S. There is no other nation to which, by reasons, of common language, tradition and sentiment, BRITAIN can look for such a degree of friendship and co-operation. This intimacy has been further cemented by joint action and sacrifice on the battlefields of AFRICA and ITALY, and this conference will bring them closer still. In war and peace the two countries are indivisible.

But the frienedship and the co-operation of RUSSIA are equally necessary to secure the peace of the world. So long as EUROPE remains the home of marauding hordes, BRITAIN and for the matter of that the U.S. also, cannot remain in isolation. The concrete purpose of the Three Power talks will be principally to strengthen the ties with RUSSIA, which hitherto has borne the brunt of the war in the European theatre and must, in future, have a share in the settlement of EUROPE. Without a close, cordial and lasting association with RUSSIA, as Churchill told the House of Commons recently, the United Nations would find at the end of the war that they have only entered upon a period of 'deepening confusion'. Unity with RUSSIA, as with the U. S. is the only foundation for a lasting peace.

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THE U. BOAT WAR, it is true, has been reopened, but with none of the terrors with which it was associated in the past three years. The devastating new weapons invented for the detection and destruction of the U-boat, coupled with the strength of the British Navy, have now forced the U-boats to the surface so that they are no longer underwater-craft entirely. Equipped with heavy anti-aircraft guns, the U-boats have now to surface in order to face their opponents, or be killed. Thus the U-boats are no longer submarines; they are only small warships which can submerge. Submarine crews have now learnt that to submerge is to die, and to surface is to combat with superior forces.

Dr. Goebbels, who has been giving publicity to U-boats as if they were film stars, may find his occupation gone. Demonstrations may still continue, and U-boat 'heroes' may continue to be lionised for the sake of keeping up morale, but all that will hereafter become more and more a futile show. The Allied strength in freighters and escorts is now greater than ever. Even with a possible continuation of U-boat successes on the same scale as in the past, the Allies have no fear of a break-down. The reserve of shipping which the United Nations have built up is now so vast.

According to the latest news, during the 4½ day convoy battle of last month in the Atlantic, Allied ships sank or damaged more U-boats than the convoy lost in merchant-ships.

THE PACIFIC BATTLE is going well for the Allies. WAKE Island has been bombed and shelled for the 7th time by a Task Force of the Pacific Fleet. Japanese warships at VELLA LAVELLA have been struck—and one of the most powerful attacks of the war has been delivered on the Japanese base of RABAUL in NEW BRITAIN, resulting in 177 enemy aircraft put out of action and 120 ships destroyed. The whole of NEW GEORGIA is now in Allied hands.

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AIR-WAR OVER GERMANY. GERMANY has been battered 6 times during the night by the R. A. F. and 8 times in daylight by the American Air Force, during the 9 days ended Oct. 12. Here is a description of the R. A. F.'s raid on MUNICH on Sep. 7 as given by the German paper *Muenchner Neueste Nachtrichten.*

'Once more the red hot wind of savage destruction has swept over our town. This tempest has left behind it smoking ruins of buildings destroyed by fire, débris of houses that collapsed and wreckage of world-famed edifices dedicated to art. Beside this path of annihilation stand many of our fellow citizens in pain, suffering and destitution.'

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CHINESE OPERATIONS. TOKYO and TOKYO-controlled Radio stations are at pains to give details of the military operations in CHINA in order to boost them as Japanese successes. But the truth is revealed by a leading Chinese paper, the *Ta Kung*. The *Japanese* fighting reported in the KWANGSI-CHEKIANG-ANTWEI, is in fact, a *Chinese* offensive, which has forced the Japanese to be on the defensive. The Japanese movements cannot be described as military, being only their usual depradations on the harvested autumn crops. Moreover, the 'operations' have a propaganda-value, to bolster morale, at a time when Allied successes are ousting the Japanese from their S. W. Pacific outposts.

The TOKYO broadcast of Sep. 8 is interesting reading. It says "Japan's strategy is to draw the enemy close to her powerful home bases. It would be poor generalship for the Japanese to fight on ground that is right on the fringe of the enemy's powerful bases in AUSTRALIA and ALASKA. Nippon's task is to complete an unassailable land, sea, and air wall round itself.'

So, it is a retreating war, like Hitler's in RUSSIA and ITALY.

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MATTERS INDIAN. Lord Louis Mountbatten—Supreme Allied Commander in the S. E. Asia Command—has arrived in NEW DELHI and is conferring with war chiefs.

MADRAS was visited last night by an enemy reconnaissance aircraft. A few bombs were dropped, but the casualties were very slight and the damage nil. A Japanese aircraft is also reported to have visited the E. coast of CEYLON. It was destroyed before it dropped any bombs.

An enemy U-boat was recently sunk in the Indian Ocean, after a relentless chase for 5 days.

Heavy bombers of the U. S. A. A. F. in INDIA have bombed the Japanese submarine bases in the ANDAMANS and the NICOBARS. With improving weather, patrolling activities have increased along the ARAKAN Front.

PREPARATIONS FOR PROPOSED THREE-POWER CONFERENCE.

DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY BEHIND SCENES.

(*Edward Montgomery*).

Though there have been few official announcements of developments, diplomatic activity has been intense behind the scenes during the last few days in preparation for various political meetings and discussions between the three great Allies, which are planned to take place in the near future.

Churchill's statement in the House of Commons, that it was hoped that a meeting between himself, Roosevelt and Stalin might be arranged before the end of the year, may be taken as the final word on that subject for the time being, for he quite rightly discouraged further speculation about it.

Preparations for a preliminary meeting between the Foreign Ministers of the three countries go steadily forward. The time and place are not yet settled, but the draft of the agenda is being discussed and is believed to be nearing completion in the three capitals. As Churchill said, "No subjects will be barred," which will simplify the task of those who have to co-ordinate the draft of agenda into a single programme for procedure of the meeting.

Though no official announcement has yet been made from Washington, reports from there during the last few days state it as an accepted fact that Cordell Hull, the American Secretary of State, will be the United States representative. Hull's attendance would certainly be most welcomed by the Governments in Britain and Russia. Hull's prestige as a statesman among the American people, and his political influence with the American Congress, stand second only to those of the President himself. His presence at the conference would give authority to its proceedings, and weight to its decisions, with the American Congress and people, such as could be achieved by no other American representative.

Similarly, the Soviet Government have considerably increased the stature and importance of the proposed "Mediterranean Commission", which is to deal with the political problems arising out of Allied military operations in that area, by appointing as its representative M. Andhrei Vishinsky, Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs. Vishinsky has been M. Molotov's immediate assistant in the conduct of Soviet Foreign policy for some years, and stands high in the councils of the Soviet Government. His appointment, is warmly welcomed in London where it is taken as a further strong evidence of the Soviet Government's interest in the affairs of Western Europe, and an earnest of its desire to share fully with the Western Powers in the responsibilities and obligations of European political and economic reconstruction and rehabilitation.

The U. S. Government have announced that Mr. Edward C. Wilson, at present U. S. Ambassador to Panama, will be its representative on the Commission. Wilson is a diplomat with considerable experience of European affairs.

The French Committee at Algiers, which is also to be represented on Britain's suggestion, has not yet announced the name of its delegate.

GERMANY'S DIPLOMATIC DEFEAT.

SEQUEL TO SPECTACULAR SALERNO WITHDRAWAL.

(W. N. Ewer.)

Germany in the last few days has suffered a major diplomatic defeat, intensified by her own folly. The pressing need of her diplomacy was for some military success which would check the tide of belief in Allied victory. The anxiety bred confidence. Ribbentrop and Goebbels on the first hint of favourable news from Salerno leapt to seize the opportunity.

Goebbels' spokesmen announced to the world, and Ribbentrop's diplomats announced to the Governments, a spectacular German victory and evacuation of Salerno by the Allied Fifth Army.

At once, and relying on the effect of this imaginary victory, German diplomacy and propaganda began to resume its old line towards neutrals and satellites alike. New pressure was put on the Hungarians and Belgians to make a fresh contribution to Germany's war. A general diplomatic offensive was launched.

And then it all crumpled. Salerno proved to be not a spectacular German victory but a spectacular German defeat. Spectacular, because it is the first time in this war that a purely German army, with all the advantage of position and with equality or superiority of numbers, has been defeated by the British and American troops.

Realisation of that is an important political factor. But the political effect would have been far less had German diplomacy been less rash and less confident of military victory. Never has German prestige fallen so heavily and swiftly as in the past few days. And no diplomacy however skilful can hope for success on a falling market of prestige. Not only has Salerno—and the simultaneous dramatic retreat all along the Russian front—been a heavy political blow to the Germans in all neutral and satellite countries. But their melodramatic success, which they tried hard to exploit, in salvage of Mussolini, has turned against them. The Duce's broadcast finally destroyed the Duce's reputation. It was clear after that halting and feeble speech that the man was no longer even a potential leader, no longer even a passably effective Quisling.

Now, Germany has thrown out a challenge to every neutral Government, a challenge which, I believe, Hitler will regret having made. Under the German orders, Mussolini has formed an "Italian Fascist Republican Government" with himself as Premier and Foreign Minister. It is claiming to be the lawful Government of Italy. This means that every neutral state will now have to choose whether to recognise Mussolini or continue to recognise Badoglio; whether to maintain diplomatic relations with Badoglio or break with Badoglio and establish relations with Mussolini. I do not believe that a single neutral—not even Spain—will decide to recognise Mussolini and enter into diplomatic relations with him. Hitler, I think, has invited a snub and will get it.

On the Allied side, the chief political development is Mr. Churchill's announcement that preparations for a conference of American, British and Soviet Foreign Ministers, and for establishment of a permanent Anglo-American-Russian political commission (on which, as Churchill said, the French Committee of National Liberation would also be represented) are well advanced.

Though there has been as yet no formal decision, Moscow seems certain to be the place of meeting of the conference. As to the date, I should forecast some time next month. Russia would be represented by M. Molotov and Britain by Mr. Eden. It is doubtful if Mr. Hull's health can stand the long journey. Mr. Harry Hopkins or Mr. Harriman seems the likeliest substitute for the American Secretary of State. As to the agenda, I should expect it to be describable in one word—" everything ". " No question," as Churchill says, " would be barred from discussion ".

Churchill's statement that he and Mr. Roosevelt and Marshal Stalin hope to meet before the end of the year, makes it plain that the meeting of Foreign Ministers will be in some way a prelude to the meeting of the " big three ".

ITALIAN ISLANDS OF THE AEGEAN.

THE DODECANESE.

The Italian Islands of the Aegean lie off the Anatolian coast, nine of them, from Patmos to Rhodes, roughly on a northwest-southeast axis, about 120 miles long, with Stampalia, Scarpanto (Karpathos) and Caso to the west and south-west of this axis, and Simi to the east. The tiny island of Çastelrosso, lying very near the Anatolian coast and about 85 miles east of Rhodes, is also included. The total area of the islands, 1,040 square miles, is slightly larger than that of Luxembourg, while that of the largest island Rhodes (546 sqare miles) is about five times that of Malta and Gozo.

The town of Rhodes is about 350 miles distant from Alexandria, 410 from Port Said, 330 from Famagusta and 170 from Candia, while Lero is only 180 from Athens, 320 from Salonica and 90 from Smyrna.

DEEP-WATER HARBOURS.

All of the islands are mountainous, and their coasts are for most of their length rugged, rising from the sea in low cliffs. The many indentations provide deep-water harbours that, though small, have excellent natural protection, and have lent themselves to use for aero-naval stations. The principal aero-naval bases were established at Lero, in the north, and Astypalaia, furthest west of the islands, while the harbour of Castelrosso was also fortified. Lero has two ports, Portolago in a bay on the south-west, with a floating dock for vessels up to 2,000 tons, and Agia Marina on the south side of Alinda Bay on the east coast. These bays provide the best anchorage in the islands. The bays of Makri Yalo, Scarpanto, also provide sheltered anchorage from north and west winds. The island of Rhodes has important airfields.

Excluding armed forces, the total population of the islands was calculated at 121,485 at the end of 1938. Of these about 120,000 were natives of the islands. The native population of Rhodes was 51,205, that of Cos was 19,029 and that of Calino 14,800. About half of the population of Rhodes was in the city itself. The remainder was located in the 47 villages of the island. There has been little Italian settlement. On Rhodes the village of Boscaioli was established with settlers from Venezia Tridentina.

PRINCIPAL CROPS.

Only Rhodes and Cos have lowland of any considerable size and 85 per cent of the cultivable area is on these two islands. Wheat is the principal cereal crop, accounting for around half of the total cereal tonnage. Next to it comes barley, and of much less importance, oats. Tomatoes, potatoes and onions are the principal vegetable crops. There is also a considerable area under tobacco.

The area under vines is about 10,000 acres, of which at least half is utilized for wine grapes. Citrus, especially oranges, and olives and figs are grown on the lower hill slopes. The higher slopes are partly occupied by grazing, principally by goats, partly by forest, both decidous and coniferous, the latter mainly pines and cypress.

TRADE.

An important branch of the fishing industry in the archipelago is the sponge fishery. Sponges were exported from Rhodes, Simi, Calino and Castelrosso.

The islands have also small mineral resources, including some chrome on Rhodes, silver-lead ores on Cos, sulphur on Nisiro, gypsum on Caso, pumica from Pali near Nisiro and quartz sand on Cos.

The islands have a very large excess of imports over exports both in tonnage and value. About two-thirds of both the import and the export trade is carried on by Rhodes. Lero comes next to Rhodes in imports.

Rhodes is the principal commercial port. In addition to the harbours mentioned there are good harbours at Tristoma on the north-west of Scarpanto, Simi, Cos, Lisso Calino and Patmo. Rhodes has a macadamized circum-insular road.

SIR DUDLEY POUND RETIRES.

(*By Clair Price*).

Ten years ago when Vice-Admiral Dudley Pound was Second Sea Lord at the British Admiralty, he remarked (so they say) that "in a few years there is going to be a hell of a fight."

The remark, if it was made, now bears all the appearance of prophecy. The brunt of that daily duel has fallen on the prophet who now retires as First Sea Lord and professional head of the British Navy.

He is of little more than medium height. He has a fine, almost sharp, nose and features, a network of light wrinkles which play cheerfully about the corners of his eyes as he talks, and a rather spare figure, which thrives on hard physical sport and plenty of it. He is now 66, and the little coloured ribbons accumulated during more than 40 years of varied naval service are drawn up in row upon row on the left breast of his jacket.

For the last quarter of a century he has served in big-ship commands and at the Admiralty. He is a great seaman and a great administrator. He returned from the command of the Mediterranean Fleet to become First Sea Lord only 10 weeks before the war began—and it was not a mere coincidence that the main fleets of the British Navy were ready for war and at their war stations when war came.

In the huge British war machine, it is the War Cabinet that lays down the broad lines of naval policy. The First Lord conveys the Cabinet's decisions to the Admiralty, and the First Sea Lord carries them into effect. Sir Dudley Pound was thus responsible for the issue of orders governing all the Navy's war operations, and the movements of its ships everywhere.

He lived in two rooms at the Admiralty. One was his office, the other, a little way down the corridor, was his bedroom. Most of his subordinates at the Admiralty live in their offices and sleep on camp beds beside their desks. Sometime between midnight and 3 a. m., the last bit of paper is swept into the files, and the Admiralty goes to bed beside its desks, for the few hours that remain before another day bursts upon it.

FONDNESS FOR SPORTS.

His tennis is better than his golf—tennis seems to run in his family—but his greatest sport is shooting. In the Mediterranean he used to take large parties ashore for a day's duck-shooting in Greece or Albania. He would walk the legs off his party in the course of the day, and at night he would go back to his flagship, where after a bath and dinner, he would settle down as fresh as a daisy to spend half the night at "paper work".

He likes men, all kinds of men, including the Greek and Albanian shepherds whom he used to encounter in their native mountains. Enlisted men in the Navy are usually terrified of so much gold braid, and not all admirals have his knack of putting an ordinary seaman at his ease.

He commanded the battleship *Colossus* at Jutland in 1916 and he commanded the Mediterranean Fleet all through the refugee problems, the tricky legal questions and the "unknown submarines" of the Spanish civil war.

FRANCE'S SECRET FIGHT.

Daniel Marithe.

Of the underground resistance to the enemy in France even the best-informed observer can seldom perceive more than a few apparently unconnected instances. There is an impenetrable mystery about the various groups in the movement. Relations between two groups may be severed by members being taken prisoner or killed. It is hard to follow the life of any one of them or to discern a collective existence. No "war correspondent" can follow this kind of warfare.

The reporter living at a *poste de commande* would not see much. Agents come in—people of all sorts, rich and poor. They are seen separately by the leaders, they exchange microscopic papers, sewn inside the lining or a pleat of a garment, for a list of instructions, or sometimes, tiny letters which are explained to them. The man—or woman—goes his way ...that is all. There is little talking at the *poste*. They work and they classify. A girl secretary comes in to ask an address. It is produced from the files, deciphered, and she has to commit it to memory. A look-out comes in, breathless. The Gestapo or the police are at the street corner. As though by magic, the lilliputian files disappear into a suitcase which is bundled out of sight. There is a hiding-place for the typewriters. There is a moment of tension. They wait, prepared to flee or to fight, as the turn of affairs may dictate. They gossip......Presently the All-Clear is given. The files reappear. Work is resumed...

This may be going on in a château, or, more often, in a humble dwelling-house, in town or in country. Nothing more is to be seen at a *poste de commande*: The dossiers,

were they stolen, would reveal nothing. It would be the work of a lifetime to decode these puzzle-letters with their blurred sketches, these fantastically labelled files, these messages in which "the green ape advises the tom-cat to close the hen-house." There is nothing here for the journalist.

He wastes no more time then at the *poste.* He might follow the fortunes of an instructor in sabotage. There are a hundred different types. One may be an officer who in mufti looks like a stage detective (for the real detectives look like innocent civilians). Another has been a motor mechanic, another a wine merchant, another a spectacled engineer. The journalist following on their heels will be able to piece little together. He will knock at many different doors, most often the humblest. He may overhear instructions which are always the same.

Of the story of the people he visits he will learn nothing, for the laws of the resistance forbid too close an interrogation of these friends *en passage.* But in all eyes he will read the same passion. He will meet only the bravest Frenchmen. We know, though we blink at the fact, that there are others. The lukewarm, or if you like it better, the ignorant, are to be found in every nation. But we can swear that in France to-day they are in the minority.

Our reporter may give his attention to "schools" or to "operations." Here again, for the observer nothing can be less interesting than the Secret War. The schools are not at all like schools. All you will find is a cellar or a barn with a man instructing two others at most. As for operations, even were they explained to the observer, they would remain without dramatic interest to him. After a silent walk by night the tired journalist suddenly loses sight of his companions. They soon return, and motion him to be silent. Next day, very little is said. The local newspaper omits to mention that the objective has been blown up. The reporter picks up a rumour that German sentries have been very properly shot.

TURKS IMPRESSED BY ALLIED SUCCESSES.

(*Leonard Kirschen*).

Important events have come to pass near Turkey. King Boris of the Bulgarians died suddenly. There is not a single Turk who is prepared to believe the official communiqué at its face value and admit that Boris died of heart failure. It is generally admitted here that his death was much more violent. Various speculations attribute his death to assassination and even suicide. But that is all beside the point, and we shall one day hear the truth.

What cannot be denied is that Boris has disappeared from the political scene of the Balkans. Boris has gone, and with him has gone the hand that regulated Bulgarian foreign policy. It is false to assume that Boris was the man who stood in the way of Bulgarian participation in the Balkan Entente. I think that Boris rather desired it at one moment, especially when Ataturk was still alive. But Boris, who had always based his dictatorship on the people's desire, had steadily followed a pro-German policy.

Bulgarians do not really love the Germans. They like the Russians who helped them to regain their independence. But a pro-German policy was the only one that could lead to the achievement of Bulgarian rapacious dreams of territorial aggrandisement. Here is the whole crux of the Bulgarian problem.

Bulgaria has acquired much territory which she claims as hers, but which really belongs to the Yugóslavs and the Greeks. Now that Boris is out of the way, will

Bulgaria throw up the sponge ? The Turks believe that this will not be the case, for the simple reason that Bulgaria will want to hang on obstinately to what she has gained without much sacrifice.

BULGARIANS ON LOSING SIDE.

The Turks think that the Bulgarians will continue to fight on that side which still promises them the robbed territories. They are so obstinate that they do not mind that the one side which still does promise them what they want is now the losing side.

Of course, one cannot judge from Turkey, how strong the democratic influences in Bulgaria are, and if one can reckon on them to overthrow the present Filoff régime which is nothing else except a disguised German occupation, now that Boris is dead.

The main point is that now the Germans have one extra worry on their hands. Boris' disappearance, coming closely after the Danish occupation, must necessarily place a supplementary strain on the already heavily taxed German defence forces.

This is also slowly soaking into Turkish minds. The Russian advance, the Danish troubles, the Swedish reaction, Portuguese worries for the Germans, the Italian invasion and Balkan defections, are all indications that the Axis is now staging its last desperate stand, and that on all fronts the victorious forces of the Allied armies are slowly and steadily going forward.

A YEAR OF SUCCESSES.

It is nearly one year from El Alamein. In this one year not a single reverse has been suffered by the Allies. Even those who had a most pessimistic view of the future cannot but realise how things stand now. One year ago, Dr. Goebbels talked a different language to that which now reaches Turkish ears via the mouth of the famous Dr. Sundermann of the German Foreign Office. Incidentally, the equally famous Dr. Paul Schmidt seems to have shut his own mouth for some time.

The theme that Germany was waging a defensive war right from the beginning, as expressed in a German statement, strikes the Turks as being a lot of empty verbiage.

Reports reaching Turkey from Berlin indicate that the exodus from Berlin after the R. A. F. raid of August 10 was complete. Those who had been reluctant to leave, when it was still time, fled in a great hurry after this first mass raid. The centre of the town and the famous Unter den Linden quarter have suffered a good deal, and much of what Hitler built has gone.

The softening process seems to have done its part. Daily, trainloads taking thousands of Germans from the Rhine and the Ruhr pass through Berlin. In fact to-day, the German Government cannot hide the distress of one region from the eyes and ears of another.

BALKAN REACTIONS.

The effects of the German exodus are also felt in Rumania. The Rumanian Government had envisaged a series of diplomatic changes in some of the neutral capitals. The Rumanians proposed to change their pro-German or pro-Italian ministers abroad for others who had no views at all, or who were known to have had pro-Allied sympathies before Marshal Antonescu came to power. But the Rumanians, probably under German pressure, hesitated to carry out these decisions and for some time no change was made.

Now at last they have decided to make the changes. A new minister has now been appointed to Ankara in the person of Alexander Cretzianu. Cretzianu was Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for a few months before Antonescu assumed power. He had already been protesting against Carol's pronounced pro-Axis policy but

had still been kept in his place. When Marshal Antonescu took over, his protests increased and he and the Marshal quarrelled. Cretzianu resigned and was placed on the retired list. Now he has been asked again to represent his country abroad.

These changes are symptomatic. They indicate the steady crumbling of the Axis European edifice. It is in this atmosphere of Allied hopes that the Turkish Medjlis is now meeting. This session of the Medjlis is destined to be a short one, and is one of the usual intermediate sessions held during the summer holidays. The Foreign Minister will seize this opportunity to talk to the Parliamentary group of the People's Party in a private meeting, and give them a general survey of the international political situation.

UNCERTAIN FUTURE.

Nothing, however, has occurred which could give any indication that Turkey has changed her mind. It may sound a little ridiculous to keep repeating this phrase in every despatch, but to day when events are moving with lightning rapidity one never knows what will happen to-morrow. As the days pass, one gains the impression that a country like Turkey cannot take decisions far in advance of events. A small country's resources are far too limited to jeopardise them in a long-term policy of risks, say the Turks. But one favourable moment, occurring with lightning rapidity—yesterday undreamed of to-day a certainty—may call for rapid decisions. Thus, even if Turkey does not want to alter her policy, some unforeseen event may make her change her mind within 24 hours. Daily the war comes nearer to Turkey and to-morrow may sweep past her shores. For all these eventualities, Turkey must be ready, and the day-to-day observation of Turkey's reactions becomes more difficult.

BIG GUNS YIELD RESULTS.

(*A. J. Mc. Whinnie*).

Wherever the Germans look in the Mediterranean to-day, they can see only a gloomy future, a gloomy outlook in which they get weaker and the Allies stronger. It will bring no comfort to the German people to be told through arguments of their radio commentators that their men might have won the battle of Salerno if it had not been for the bombarding intervention of the British Navy. From Salerno the world learned how the big guns of Britain's naval might came inshore—to within a mile of the coast—as floating forts in support of the Allied land forces. Those who maintained before the war and even since the war began that air power had smashed the possibility of naval intervention against land positions, found themselves disproved by facts when sufficient air cover was present.

Behind the mighty effectiveness of the British bombardments from the sea lies a story of staggering improvements in British naval gunnery—mainly in spotting technique—undreamed of at Gallipoli.

The Mediterranean war shows how big ships—battleships—can play more than one rôle. Many people said that the day of the battleship was doomed. Hitler was one of them.

GERMAN TRANSPORT DIFFICULTIES.

Britain nearly two years ago was in a perilous position in the Mediterranean. For two months she had only three cruisers to hold these vital waters. But there is a big difference between the British sea war potential and the German sea war potential. Britain knew in her darkest days that reinforcements were coming from the shipyards and coming from her allies. Even before the fall of Sicily, however, the German High

Command was so anxious about their Mediterranean shipping position that Herr Kauffman, German Director of shipping, was rushed to the Mediterranean to wrestle with the most serious of Hitler's shipping difficulties.

The surrender of the Italian fleet enables more British warships and submarines to hunt down any German shipping which Herr Kauffman tries to sneak through the British blockade.

BRITAIN'S MEDITERRANEAN STRENGTH.

In the Mediterranean, Germany has freighters acquired from Vichy plus some seized from Italy. There may be a few small German-manned French warships and a limited number of German U-boats which can be ordered out to the difficult task of convoying ships and linking-up North Italy with the South of France and, further afield, supplying German garrisons in Crete, Greece, Yugoslavia and the Dodecanese. But no doubt German sea transport problems contributed to the Berlin decision to get out of Sardinia.

British sea power is stronger now in the Mediterranean than at any time in history. The enemy's sea power in the Mediterranean is more reduced than at any time in history—though his commitments are so much greater.

Britain must be prepared for the possibility of the few Italian destroyers and torpedo boats and light coastal forces being used eventually by the Germans in the Mediterranean. But it will still take a long time for German seamen to get accustomed to the strange Italian engines and instruments in Italian warships.

TOUGHEST JOB IN THE WORLD.

With such slender shipping resources, Germany must support her Mediterranean garrisons, sweep up Allied mines, fight British submarines and surface warships, watch for new landings and beat off Allied aircraft. For Berlin it is an impossible situation.

The German mind, despite overwhelming disappointments, clings still to the fading hopes that U-boats will stage a come-back in the Mediterranean. It all depends on the U-boat position in the Atlantic.

Colonel Knox, U. S. Navy Secretary, has warned the Allies that U-boats may return in force to the North Atlantic trade routes. Allied preparations have been made to meet any new U-boat campaign. If the next U-boat campaign follows the course of those of the spring and the summer, there will be no U-boats to spare for the even more dangerous waters of the Mediterranean. If the next campaign is waged in the Mediterranean despite the known dangers, Berlin must expect casualties of U-boats to be overwhelmingly heavy.

SATURATION AND SURRENDER.

The technique of 'saturation bombing' is making enormous strides, as evinced by a comparison of the results obtained in the recent raids over Hamburg and Essen with those of previous raids.

The truly astonishing improvement obtained cannot be better described than in cold, hard figures—showing the weight of bombs in tons—per minute in the past year :—

Lubeck	...	March, 1942	300 tons at the rate of 2 tons per minute.
Cologne	...	May, ,,	1,500 tons at the rate of 16.7 tons per minute.
St. Nazaire	...	February, 1943	1,000 tons at the rate of 22 tons per minute.
Essen	...	April 30, ,,	1,000 tons at the rate of 25 tons per minute.

Duisberg	...	May 12, 1943	1,350 tons at the rate of 30	tons per minute.
Dortmund	...	" 30, "	over 2,000 tons at the rate of 34	tons per minute.
Dusseldorf	...	June 11, "	over 2,000 tons at the rate of 34	tons per minute.
Hamburg	...	July 24, "	2,500 tons at the rate of 46	tons per minute.
Essen	...	" 25, "	2,000 tons at the rate of 40	tons per minute.

"In the two nights of July 24th and 25th, the R. A. F., alone, not taking into account American daylight raiders, dropped on Hamburg and Essen about two-thirds of the total tonnage which the entire German air force was able to drop on London during the German 'blitz' in a total of 90 nights—4,300 tons in two nights, against 7,000 tons in 90 nights".

WHO'S FIGHTING WHOM?

(With acknowledgments to the Illustrated Weekly of India).

In a recent issue of the Journal of the United Services Institution of India there appeared an editorial note containing the statement that Great Britain (and of course the Empire) is, with Czechoslovakia, the only country at war with the entire Axis. This statement was disputed by a correspondent who felt sure that it was wrong.

To answer the point the Editor in the following issue appended the names of the United Nations (some of them represented by refugee Governments) and of the countries against which they have declared war. The list struck me as so interesting that I am reproducing it for the benefit of my readers. The article was published before the Italian capitulation.

The British Empire and Czechoslovakia are fighting against the entire Axis, i. e., Germany, Italy, Japan, Finland, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria and Siam.

U. S. A. against all, excepting Finland.

Nicaragua and Haiti, against all except Finland and Siam.

U. S. S. R., against Germany, Italy, Finland, Hungary and Rumania.

Greece, against Germany, Italy and Bulgaria.

Yugoslavia, against Germany, Italy, Japan, Hungary and Bulgaria.

China, Belgium, Netherlands, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Salvador, Mexico and Ethiopia, against Germany, Italy and Japan.

Costa Rica, against Germany, Italy, Japan, Hungary and Rumania.

Poland, against Germany and Japan.

Brazil against Germany and Italy.

Norway and Luxemburg, against Germany.

I have a feeling that this list is not now quite complete; Iraq, for example, is also a belligerent and is not mentioned. Nor are the Fighting French. But the list contains enough facts to suggest that this is in some respects a very peculiar war.

WHO ARE THE 'COMMANDOS'?

What sort of men are the men of the Commandos, and how are they chosen and trained? They are the crack guerrilla fighters of Britain, and they come from every unit

of the British Army—cavalry, infantry, artillery, sappers. Their first qualification is a fine physique. They must be alert, quick-thinking and resourceful. Officers of the Commandos choose their men personally, and only after very critical examination.

All the men of the Commandos are experienced soldiers when they start, so there is little of the barrack-square discipline in their training. For months in the year, even in the middle of winter, they live in bivouac tents and learn to get their food off the country by hunting and trapping. Woodcraft and fieldcraft are taught to them by seasoned hunters. Everything possible is done to promote them to a state of independence and self-sufficiency. A knife is always in their hands and becomes an instinctive weapon. Their shooting with rifle, machine-gun and pistol is expert, and again the weapon is instinctive, and the trigger finger is taught to act almost before the brain has registered a brief glimpse of the target. They are familiar with enemy weapons too. Each man is a boxer and has a knowledge of ju-jitsu. He can swim distances in full kit and keep his rifle dry, he can march sixty miles in a day, and he can go without food and water for long periods.

He learns to row and to paddle and to handle a boat. He learns to climb steep cliffs and to move across country like a snake. He learns about explosives and the right way to blow up bridges and set fire to stores. He is trained in the more unorthodox methods of fighting.

FISH CULTURE IN PADDY FIELDS.

How paddy cultivators can earn a second income from fish culture in paddy fields is shown in an article fn the current issue of *Indian Farming*. If the rice and jute acreage in Bengal is used for growing fish simultaneously with these crops, it is estimated that the farmers would gain an additional income of Rs. 5 crores. At the present time the additional supplies of fish would help to meet the food shortage.

On account of warmth and richness of planktonic life, the growth of fish in shallow-water fisheries is rapid, and within a few months, they attain a size of a foot to 18i nches, which normally would require two years to attain in an average perennial tank.

As the fish move about in the paddy fields, the plants are shaken and some of the injurious insects drop to the surface of the water and are devoured. The movements also help to increase tillering action whereby the mud and weeds are loosened. By feeding on soft weeds, fish help the growth of paddy plants, while their excreta serve as good manure.

The culture of fish along with paddy is extensively practised in Japan, where fry is distributed free for this purpose. In British Guiana steps are to be taken for the culture of fish with plant crops. In India, it is urged, the idea would be useful, not only in increasing rural incomes but in adding materially to the food supply.

"ETHYL"—LEADED PETROL FOR INDIA.

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The public is warned that it is dangerous to use petrol, ordinarily sold in India for cooking, lighting and cleaning purposes.

This warning is necessary as all petrol ordinarily sold for use as motor fuel will now contain lead. This petrol is popularly known as "Ethyl" and has hitherto been

dyed a distinctive colour and all receptacles containing it have been specially marked: "Warning: This spirit contains lead and should be used as motor fuel only".

Ethyl will now be generally issued for rationed consumption. It will be coloured red but otherwise issued with no other warning.

Petrol should not, therefore, be used for dry cleaning, or for removing stains from clothes, shoes, hats, etc., or in cooking stoves or as a solvent for the extraction of oil from seeds or in lamps in houses.

Persons requiring supplies of un-leaded petrol for domestic or industrial purposes, or where the petrol itself will come into frequent contact with the skin of the operative or with any edible commodity, should apply to the nearest Petrol Rationing Authority. Supplies of un-leaded petrol are very limited, and only in cases of real necessity will issues be made.

'V' DIARY, 1944.

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THE SECRETARY,
National War Front Bureau,
PUDUKKOTTAI. (South India).

PUDUKKOTTAI STATE NATIONAL WAR FRONT BUREAU.

PROGRAMME.

LECTURE CLXVIII. (*Batch 2*).

16-10-43	Municipal Office ...	6.00 p.m.
17-10-43	Kudumiyamalai ...	7.00 "
"	Parambur ...	7.30 "
18-10-43	Vengalur ...	7.00 "
"	Konapattu ...	7.30 "
19-10-43	Nachchandupatti ...	7.00 "
"	Virachchilai ...	7.30 "
20-10-43	C. S. M. High School...	10.00 a.m.
"	Rani's High School ...	10.45 "
20-10-43	College A English ...	11.00 a.m.
"	College B Tamil ...	11.00 "
"	Kulipirai ...	7.00 p.m.
"	Sevalur ...	7.30 "
21-10-43	Kalamavur ...	7.00 "
"	Nallur ...	7.30 "
22-10-43	Panayappatti ...	7.00 "
"	Rangiyam ...	7.30 "

LECTURE CLXIX. (*Batch 3*).

23-10-43	Municipal Office ...	6.00 p.m.
24-10-43	Surakkadu ...	7.00 "
"	Kottaikkadu ...	7.30 "
25-10-43	Viralimalai ...	7.00 "
"	Poruvai ...	7.30 "
26-10-43	Malaiyur ...	7.00 p.m.
"	Karambakkudi ...	7.30 "
29-10-43	Valaramanikkam. ...	7.00 "
"	Embal ...	7.30 "

RECRUITING—ADVERTISEMENT—4 p. m.

16—10—43	Tirumayyam.
17—10—43	Tittanviduthi.
18—10—43	Arimalam.
19—10—43	Perambur.
20—10—43	Karambakkudi.
21—10—43	Kilanilai.
22—10—43	Pudukkottai.
23—10—43	Vettamviduthi.
24—10—43	Marudankoneviduthi.
26—10—43	Konapattu.
29—10—43	Pudukkottai.

Sri Brihadamba State Press, Pudukkottai. 750—17-10-43.